



ROCKLAND P.L.U.S.

PLANNING LAND USE WITH STUDENTS

Site & Community Assessment

**Page 1 is to be completed during a field visit by the students, independently in or small groups.*

Page 2 focuses on community linkages - designed for small group work in class.

SITE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS #1-5:

1. List 5 descriptive words that you think best describe the appearance of your transit station.
Run down, colorless, separated from the area, PARKING LOT, no plants
2. List 5 descriptive words that you think best describe the appearance of the area around the transit station.
Shopping, really big, cement-cement-cement, large parking lot, indoor shopping only!
3. What challenges do you see in improving the transit station and redeveloping the area around it? (for example: expenses, competing business, clean up costs, traffic issues, etc.)
 - *Getting people out of their cars and connect them to buses and trains – need a campaign!*
 - *Reluctance of some to mix residential with commercial*
 - *Hard to get people to stop thinking about needing lots of parking!*
 - *Need to deal with flooding problems in the area*
4. What community enhancing features (CEF) at this site should be added, retained or enhanced? Do any of them match the CEF you selected during our classroom activity? Which one/s? - Remember to consider uses for the different periods of time: ES, HS, Senior
 - *Large space – mulituse center to serve different ages- possible center for children & seniors together*
 - *Recreation & park use as part of the facility with indoor and outdoor use*
 - *Include local business & farmers market*
 - *Add greenery in parking space for natural stormwater collection*
 - *Connect transit to merge train, buses, bikes and walkways*
5. In planning, the support of others who live and work in the community is an important part of the process. Think about different groups and members of your community that might care about what happens to this space (for example sports teams, senior citizen groups, affordable housing groups, homes and businesses near the site).
 - *Apple Computers to partner in internet café &/or young persons creative hang out for sharing talent*
 - *Real Estate*
 - *Steps to a Healthier NY*
 - *Museum*
 - *County and Local Towns to work on transit connections*
 - *Project for Public Spaces – a company that works with towns to create ‘destinations’*
 - *Light Industry – solar panel business, computers etc.*

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Team activity: to complete as a class project or small groups.

Think about your village/town and consider its strengths and weaknesses. How can your site improve your community? Use your own knowledge of your community or check the County website -

<https://rocklandgov.com>

Considering your wider community (the village or town around the site), rate the following features under **Strengths** or **Needs/Challenges** using a score of 1 (mainly absent) to 5 (well represented). Support your number choice with a few words of explanation.

Community Feature – How does your community rank in these categories?	Strengths Rank: 1 (low) to 5 (high)	Comments: Needs/Challenges
Cultural Community Character: <i>Places of Historical Significance* Arts* Theatres</i>	5	Maintain a sense of place, Improve treatment of cemetery, include art & music in the mall
Demographic Diversity: <i>Diversity of people and backgrounds</i>	5	Countywide there is diversity but varies by town, include culture – hispanic, African American etc.
Housing/Affordability/Mix of Housing: <i>Apartments* Condos* Single family homes* Options for singles*Families * Retired</i>	3	Include housing for mixed income, and seniors
Transportation/Accessibility/Walkability: <i>Public transportation* Sidewalks* Drivable roads* Bike Trails*Crosswalks *Walking Paths</i>	1-3	Bus service only fair, but shuttle exists for seniors. Many areas with no walkways, and no bikeways. Poor mass transit.
Health & Wellness: <i>Healthy food options*Exercise opportunities* Preventive treatment*Clinics and hospitals close by *Opportunities for Health Education</i>	4	Safety is an issue in some communities. Overall we have health options with hospitals, clinics, Steps to a healthier Rockland
Social/Recreation: <i>Opportunities for various ages: children/teens/adults/seniors?</i>	3-4	Clubs for adults, rotaries, commerce groups, sports clubs. 1/3 of county is parks. Need more neighborhood parks and activities for teens & young adults.
Wilderness: <i>Undeveloped areas ranging from open space to parkland</i>	4	1/3 of county is parkland but it is isolated in the northern sections – not available to all.
Environmental Awareness: <i>Community awareness? Of streams? Recycling? Are people energy conscious?</i>	3	Some programs, minimize pesticides, recycling etc. Yet lack consistent conservation & energy policies.
Water & Energy Conscious Development: <i>Stormwater runoff collection, Energy saving (i.e. solar or automatic light switch off), green building requirements.</i>	2	Need a comprehensive water policy and energy policy. Lack of finance & laws to provide incentives.
Goods & Services (i.e. stores, shopping): <i>Can you walk to them?</i>	5	Several large malls with an abundance of items for sale.
Education: <i>Are there schools there? (pre schools through college level)</i>	5	Many K12 schools and several colleges. Preschool is a challenge for some low income families.
Safety: <i>Is there street lighting, fire depts., police? Do residents feel safe?</i>	3	Some pockets very safe but others have high crime rates.
Employment: <i>Range of opportunities from entry level to professional</i>	3	County has lost most light industry, shortage of trade skills jobs
Aging in Place: <i>Transportation & living space for seniors in the community</i>	3	Cost for senior facilities is high. Walkability is a factor although the shuttle service exists

***Brainstorm:** Based on your completed table, evaluate the overall needs of the community. Do you see opportunities for the TOD to improve your community? (Look for low rankings in column #2)